

Message Text

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ACTION OES-09

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C O N F I D E N T I A L TEHRAN 6805

E.O. 11652:GDS
TAGS: TECH, ENRG, MNUC, IR
SUBJ: ATOMIC ENERGY ORGANIZATION OF IRAN-USDOE
ENRICHMENT SERVICES AND SPENT FUEL STORAGE PLANS

REF: TEHRAN 6684

1. SUMMARY: IN JULY 17 MEETING WITH AEOI V.P. FOR FUEL
CYCLE, SCIATT RAISED SUBJECTS OF (A) NON-BINDING NOTICE
OF INTENT TO CONVERT U.S. LTFC ENRICHMENT SERVICES CONTRACTS
TO (AFC) ADJUSTABLE FIXED COMMITMENT CONTRACTS AND; (B)
AEOI SPENT FUEL POOL STORAGE CAPACITY AND REQUIREMENTS
THROUGH END OF CENTURY. INTEREST IN (A) HAD BEEN
MARGINAL WITHIN AEOI UNTIL RECENT WEEKS WHEN IT HAS BECOME
APPARENT THAT BILATERAL ACCORD BETWEEN OUR GOVERNMENTS IS
IMMINENT AND COROLLARY RIGHTS TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF ENRICH-
MENT SERVICES CONTRACTS WITH U.S. NOW SEEM VIABLE. AEOI
IS CURRENTLY STUDYING OPTION AND SHOULD MAKE FINAL DECISION
RE NOTICE OF NON-BINDING INTENT TO CONVERT WITHIN TWO
WEEKS. CONSEQUENTLY, EMBASSY REQUEST DOE EXTENSION OF
JULY 17 DEADLINE AT LEAST UNTIL END OF JULY. RE (B),
SPENT FUEL REQUIREMENTS FOR FULL 23,000 MWE PROJECTED
INSTALLED NUCLEAR CAPACITY ARE MET USING COMPACT REACTOR
POOL STORAGE DESIGN, WHIH ACCOMMODATES FOUR CORES PER
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REACTOR THROUGH 1995 AT EARLIEST, AND THROUGH TUNE OF
CENTURY USING SPENT FUEL RESHUFFLING AMONG AVAILABLE
REACTOR SPENT FUEL POOLS. THIS CAPABILITY EXISTS WITH
NO RPT NO CENTRAL SPENT FUEL STORAGE POND CONSTRUCTION.
LONG TERM MAINTENANCE AND ADMINISTRATION (SUPERVISORY
RESPONSIBILITY) OF SPENT FUEL POOLS IS CONERN TO AEOI.
REPROCESSING, PREFERABLY BY WEAPON STATE (S) WITH RETENTION

OF FISSILE MATERIALS BY THAT STATE, AND RETURN TO IRAN OF CORRESPONDING FEW SQUARE METERS OF VITRIFIED WASTES FOR BURIAL, APPEARS THE MORE LOGICAL AND SIMPLER APPROACH TO RAFIZADEH, ASSUMING INSTITUTIONAL ACCEPTANCE OF THIS METHOD IN COMING YEARS, PRIOR TO OR IN LIEU OF EVENTUAL COMMERCIAL USE OF MIXED OXIDE FUEL IN LIGHT WATER REACTORS. END SUMMARY.

2. DR HAMID RAFIZADEH, VICE PRESIDENT--FUEL CYCLE, ADVISED SCIATT IN JULY 17 MEETING THAT AEOI NOW HAS SIGNIFICANLY GREATER INTEREST IN OPPORTUNITY FOR CONVERSION OF LTFC ENRICHMENT SERVICES CONTRACT TO AFC ARRANGEMENT, THAN EXISTED EVEN TWO MONTHS AGO. THIS HEIGHTENED INTEREST DUE DIRECTLY TO RECENT INITIALING OF BILATERAL AGREEMENT FOR COOPERATION AND EXPECTATION THAT FORMAL ACCORD BETWEEN GOI AND USG IS NEAR. RIGHT TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF DOE ENRICHMENT SERVICE CONTRACTS WITH IRAN NECESSARILY FOLLOWS FROM ACCORD. THEREFORE DURING NEXT WEEK OR TWO AEOI WILL CONSIDER CONVERSION OPTION AND NOTIFY EMBASSY OF FORMAL RESPONSE TO PROVIDE NON-BINDING NOTICE OF INTENT TO CONVERT LTFC TO AFC.

3. RAFIZADEH STATED THAT NUCLEAR FUEL RESPONSIBILITIES WILL REMAIN WITH AEOI. EMBASSY BELIEVES IT IS TOO EARLY TO KNOW HOW NUCLEAR FUEL RESPONSIBILITIES WILL BE ASSIGNED. EDUCATED GUESS SUGGESTS EXPLORATION, ORE CONFIDENTIAL

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COMMITMENTS, AND PLANNING FOR BACK END OF FUEL CYCLE WILL BE RETAINED BY AEOI'S RAFIZADEH ALTHOUGH RUMOR EXISTS THAT NATIONAL IRANIAN OIL COMPANY (NIOC) VYING FOR ORE EXPLORATION RESPONSIBILITY; FUEL SUPPLY TIED TO ON GOING NUCLEAR REACTOR CONTRACTS WILL GO WITH SOTOUDEHNIA TO MOE.

4. SCIATT TOLD RAFIZADEH THAT PREPARATORY TO STATE DEPT DISCUSSIONS WITH USG LEGISLATIVE BRANCH OF U.S. IRAN BILATERAL AGREEMENT FOR COOPERATION, DESCRIPTION IS NEEDED OF IRAN'S SPENT FUEL POOL CAPACITY AND REQUIRMENTS. RAFIZADEH STATED THAT ORIGINAL SPENT FUEL POOL REACTOR DESIGN BY EUROPEAN SUPPLIERS WAS FOR ONE AND TWO THIRDS (5/3) CORES BUT THIS WAS CHANGED THROUGH COMPACT STORAGE REDESIGN TO ACCOMMODATE FOUR FULL CORES PER REACTOR. THEREFORE, NOTING SCHEDULE FOR INTRODUCTION OF NUCLEAR INSTALLED CAPACITY OF 23,000 MWE IN IRAN, STORAGE CAPACITY IS MET FOR SPENT FUEL THROUGH 1995 AT EARLIEST. WITH SPENT FUEL RESHUFFLING AMONG AVAILABLE REACTOR SPENT FUEL POOLS, STORAGE REQUIREMENTS WOULD BE MET THROUGH END OF CENTURY. IF RESHUFFLING WERE NOT EMPLOYED, BUT ONE CENTRAL STORAGE POND WERE BUILD,

SAME RESULT WOULD OBTAIN.

5. AT THIS POINT, RAFIZADEH STATED HIS CONCERN FOR LONG-TERM SPENT FUEL STORAGE MAINTENANCE AND SUPERVISORY RESPONSIBILITY IN IRAN. HE MENTIONED POSSIBLE DETERIORATION OF SPENT FUEL INTEGRITY OVER TIME AS ONE CONCERN, CONTRASTING THIS WITH SIMPLER/AEOI PREFERRED SITUATION WHERE SPENT FUEL IS REPROCESSSED IN NUCLEAR WEAPON STATE SUCH AS FRANCE REPROCESSSED FISSILE MATERIAL WOULD BE HELD IN FRANCE WITH ONLY VITRIFIED WASTE RETURNED TO IRAN FOR CUSTODIAL CARE AND /OR BURIAL. HE STATED THAT THE APPROXIMATELY 150 KG OF PLUTONIUM RECLAIMED FROM EACH 30 MTU SPENT FUEL COMING FROM A 1,000 MWE NUCLEAR REACTOR ANNUALLY SHOULD NOT REPRESENT CONFIDENTIAL

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STORAGE PROBLEM TO THE REPROCESSOR; NEITHER WOULD THE APPROXIMATELY THREE SQUARE METERS OF VITRIFIED WASTE FROM EACH REPROCESSSED CORE OF SPENT FUEL REPRESENT ANY DIFFICULTY IN ITS DISPOSAL, TO IRAN.
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